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# AZALEA GALL

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The fungus, Exobasidium vaccinii Wor., which causes leaf, stem, and bloom galls of Azalea (Rhododendron indicum (L.) Sweet), is present in Florida. A similar type galling is produced on species of Camellia and is thought by some to be caused by the same organism. Azalea gall is more common and widely distributed than Camellia gall. The seriousness of this disease varies from slight to severe galling depending on environmental conditions.

SYMPTOMATOLOGY. The leaves of Azaleas and Camellias become thickened or fleshy, either wholly or in part, and turn pale green or whitish. The flower parts become greatly thickened so that the whole bloom is turned into a hard fleshy, waxy, irregular gall, the parts of which become covered with a whitish bloom. Even the seed pods become fleshy and gall-like. When found in nature, the galls are called "pinkster apples." The infection of host often causes a swelling of infected parts which is chiefly due to hypertrophy of the host cells (Figs. 1 and 2). The diseased tissue usually becomes red.

CONTROL. Remove all galls and spray plant with basic copper sulfate or Zineb.

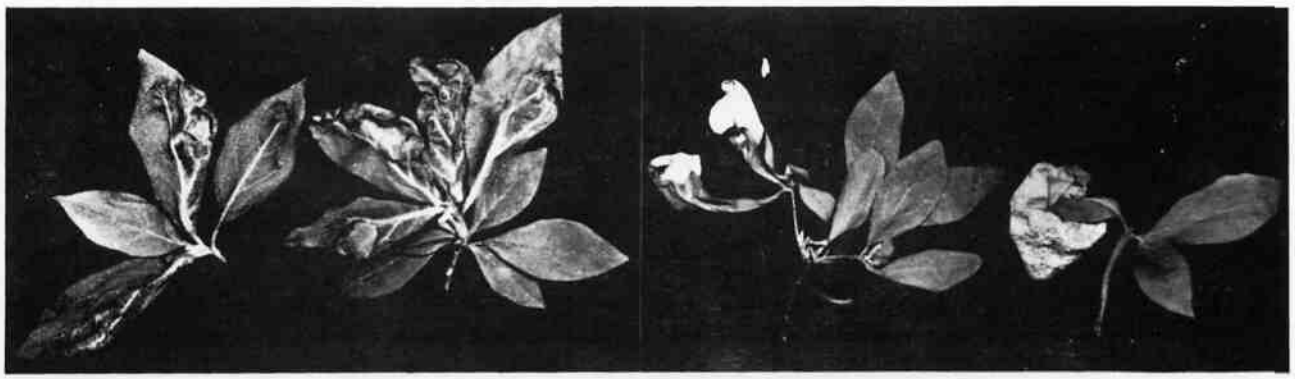

Fig. 1. Progressive stages of Azalea leaf galling.

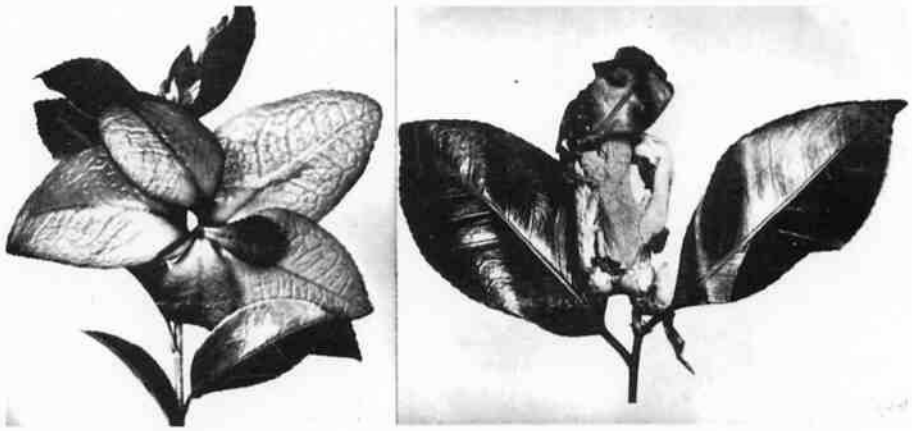

Fig. 2. Progressive stages of Camellia leaf galling.

References

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